R E P O R T R E S U M E S

ED 013 831 TE 500 018

THE FUTURE OF THE ENGLISH CURRICULUM.

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MODERN LANGUAGE ASSN. OF AMERICA, NEW YORK, N.Y.

PUB DATE 67

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.25 HC-$1.84 46P.

DESCRIPTORS- *INSTITUTES (TRAINING PROGRAMS), *ENGLISH CURRICULUM, *INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS, *ENGLISH INSTRUCTION, *INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS CENTERS, INSTRUCTIONAL IMPROVEMENT, MATERIAL DEVELOPMENT, TEACHING METHODS, READING INSTRUCTION, COMPOSITION (LITERARY), LITERATURE, GRAMMAR, NDEA INSTITUTES, ENGLISH INSTITUTE MATERIALS CENTERS, LOYOLA UNIVERSITY,

A SELECTION OF PAPERS DELIVERED ON JANUARY 28-31, 1967 AT LOYOLA UNIVERSITY'S NDEA INSTITUTE ON ENGLISH INSTITUTE MATERIALS CENTER (EIMC) MATERIALS CONSIDERED MEANS OF IMPROVING THE SELECTION AND USE OF CURRICULUM MATERIALS IN 1967 SUMMER INSTITUTES. IN THE "INTRODUCTION" JAMES D. BARRY EXPLAINS THE PURPOSE AND WORKINGS OF THE INSTITUTE. FOUR "TRENDS" PAPERS FROM THE CONFERENCE INCLUDED HERE PROVIDE EXPOSITION OF MAJOR IDEAS STIRRING THE PROFESSION AND DEMONSTRATE THE IMPORTANCE OF CONSIDERING TEXTBOOKS, COURSES, WORKSHOPS, OR MATERIALS IN TERMS OF SEMINAL IDEAS. THE PAPERS ARE "TRENDS IN TEACHING LITERATURE" BY ARTHUR M. EASTMAN, "TRENDS IN TEACHING LANGUAGE" BY HAROLD B. ALLEN, "TRENDS IN TEACHING COMPOSITION" BY WALLACE W. DOUGLAS, "TRENDS IN READING" BY WALTER T. PETTY, AND "THE USES OF EIMC MATERIALS IN 1966--SIGNIFICANCE FOR THE FUTURE" BY LEO RUTH. (BN)

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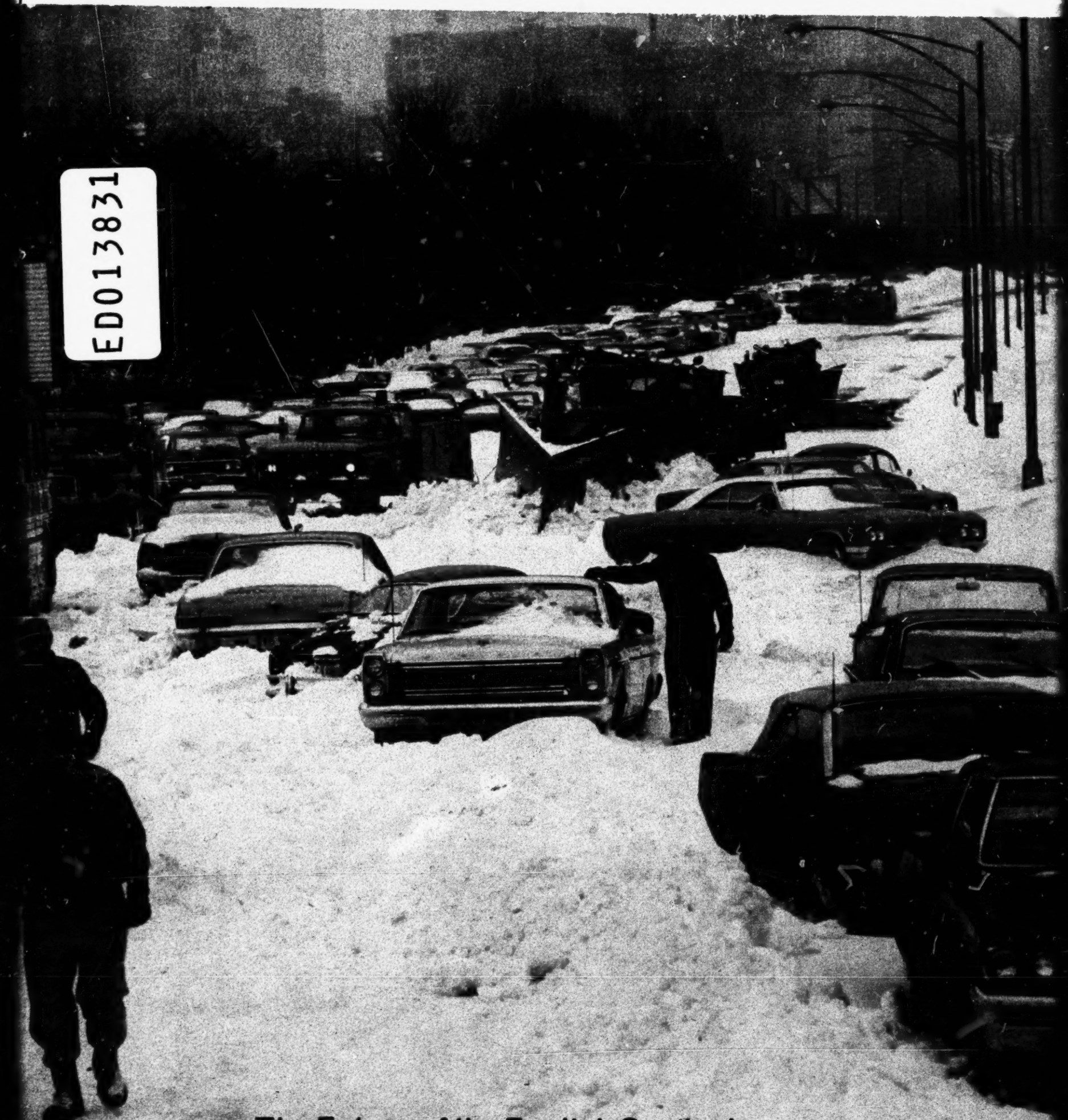

The Future of the English Curriculum

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Introduction

by

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An introduction to a selection of papers delivered at Loyola University's NDEA Institute on EIMC Materials (January 28-31, 1967) could take many forms. Because the institute coincided with--and fought against--the worst snow storm in Chicago's history, a human interest story would make an appealing introduction. It would feature such interesting scenes as Jim Squire (NCTE) pushing a bus on the Indiana turnpike, Marie McCleary (Texas Southern) arriving here from Houston on January 25 only to be snowbound at her sister's home until January 30, Minnie Wells (University of Alaska) getting from Fairbanks to Seattle only to be forced back to Fairbanks. It would include our wondering about whether Frances Zirko (Eastern Montana College) made it partly because her husband works in the control tower at the Billings airport; about whether the refusal by Chicago's weathermen to call the storm a blizzard should be interpreted as an example of the arbitrariness of language or as an indication that some forces do not accept the concept of generalization; about the advisability of ever again scheduling Chicago for a mid-winter meeting.

Or a more philosophical essay might develop if the writer focused on all the discussions of God, fate, chance, nature, and luck that swirled about the almost empty Edgewater Beach Hotel, scene of the institute. Or possibly a literary analysis of the telegram prose style used by members of the institute (one director joined the two parts of his wire with moreover) and what it reflected about their view of English might be undertaken.

But these approaches, however appealing they might be for those who succeeded and those who did not succeed in reaching Chicago for Loyola's institute, would have little interest outside this group. What the institute set out to do, how the papers that follow relate to the institute as a whole, what this institute can say to us about future conferences, how the institute reflects something about the profession today--these matters are of wider interest and it is to them that I will address myself.

I

Loyola's NDEA Institute on EIMC Materials was conceived as a means of improving the selection and use of some 4400 pages of curriculum materials in 1967 summer institutes. These materials, developed at seventeen Curriculum Study and Demonstration Centers funded by the Cooperative Research Branch of the United States Office of Education, were made available to institute directors by the English Institute Materials Center, an office of the Modern Language Association of America. Evaluation of both the 1965 and the 1966 NDEA Institutes revealed that both the selection and the use of EIMC materials needed improvement. Accordingly, Loyola University (in collaboration with the Modern Language Association, the National Council of Teachers of English, and the Curriculum Centers based at the University of Illinois, Northern Illinois University, Northwestern

University, and the University of Wisconsin) proposed that the Office of Education fund a special institute that would serve as an occasion for the examination, analysis, and discussion of the nature and use of EIMC Materials. After the proposal was approved, the details of the program were further refined by the Director and the Advisory Board--composed of Wallace W. Douglas (Northwestern), J. N. Hook (Illinois), Andrew MacLeish (Northern Illinois), Robert C. Pooley (Wisconsin), Michael F. Shugrue (MLA), and James R. Squire (NCTE). On January 26, 1967, the day on which what Chicagoans now refer to as "supersnow" began to fall, seventy-seven individuals representing seventy-five institutes were on the list of participants. They were planning to confer with directors or their representatives from the seventeen curriculum centers and with eleven special consultants. Before the institute ended ten consultants, three observers, twelve curriculum center directors, and thirty-three individuals representing thirty institutes (eighteen in English, eleven in Reading, and one in Disadvantaged Youth) had conferred. They were almost unanimous in pronouncing the institute a success: EIMC materials had been examined, analyzed, and thought about as planned.

But this success was not, interestingly, traceable to a concentration on EIMC materials alone, though they were the focus of attention. The institute had four segments, segments that suggest to us important ideas about our discipline, that come together to keep us from both provincialism and failure to focus:

(1) The "trends" papers, four of which are reproduced here, provided us with expositions on the major ideas stirring the profession today. The formal presentations of trends in general education theory, literature, language, composition, and reading were not concerned with EIMC materials; rather they suggested to us a Brunerian structure to which we could refer in our other discussions. The "trends" papers demonstrated the importance of approaching such significant but partial components of an institute as textbooks, courses, workshops, or materials in terms of seminal ideas. No conference of this type, that is, dealing with a part of a program or discipline, indeed no intellectual activity, should be without the equivalent of our "trends" papers.

(2) The bringing together of participants (in this case institute directors) and staff (in this case curriculum center directors chiefly) provided the opportunity for focusing attention on the materials themselves. These conferences should be held on both a formal and an informal basis. Every participant who must make important decisions based on such a meeting should have the opportunity to hear every staff member make his presentation. We have tended to think that participants wish to make a choice among speakers and that they will take advantage of an intelligently scheduled program to have informal conferences with those whose formal papers they do not choose to hear. This is evidently not true if the participants are looking for help in the decision-making process. Our necessary adjusting of the program allowed institute directors to choose eight formal presentations from the twelve presented by the curriculum center directors attending. Many of our participants regretted that we had not been able to schedule all twelve at separate times. Informal conferences between participants and staff seem to take place as a supplement to, not as a substitute for, formal presentations. (Because of space limitation and the periodic description of the Centers in PMLA, no paper on this segment is reprinted here.)

(3) The consideration of how EIMC materials were used in the past as a means of making more intelligent choice and use of them in 1967 reflected our interest in learning from the past. Precisely how the past can be used to prepare for the future is the burden of Leo Ruth's paper. A related point need not be labored: teachers of the humanities have probably been guilty of paying excessive rather than insufficient attention to the past. We are now in danger of becoming too innovative. Past experience must not be overlooked--or over looked at.

(4) Considering the place of trends and new curriculum materials in today's schools is another safeguard against provincialism--and against a too theoretical consideration of practical materials. What practical good is it to master new curriculum materials unless there is a program for getting them into the schools? Michael F. Shugrue's report on the English Teacher Preparation Study (not reproduced here regrettably) suggested to us how new materials could influence the preparation in English of future elementary and secondary school teachers of English. Another institute paper that cannot unfortunately be included here is by Richard Short, Superintendent, Maine Township High Schools; he discussed the ways in which innovations can be made operational in the elementary and secondary schools. As we go about the business of our discipline, we must make certain that we are doing more than merely talking among ourselves. English and reading involve home and society as well as study and classroom.

II

The "trends" in the field, the conferences between institute directors and curriculum center directors, the looking to the past as a prelude to the future, and the placing of our work in the context of total school and of society--these segments of Loyola's institute saved us from both the smothering details of individual lesson plans and glittering generalities on English and life experience.

We learned something else during these days, that homogeneity can be overrated. Yes, we were bound together by our interest in new curriculum materials. But we were also greatly diversified--in past experience, in the level of teachers that we are interested in, in the components of the institute that we are preparing, in the kind of school that we are associated with, etc. In short, this institute was marked by diversity within unity; people with richly varied backgrounds and interests were speaking and reacting to new ideas and their manifestation in new materials.

Finally, Loyola's NDEA Institute on EIMC Materials reminded us that strengthening the quality of those forces that we have is of far-reaching consequence. It would probably be desirable to have every elementary and secondary school teacher of English and reading attend a summer institute, but this is not going to happen. One road open to us is to use those teachers who can be enrolled in institutes as a leaven. The best way to effect this end is to make our institute programs outstanding. And a very good way to make them outstanding is to strengthen their directors in all areas of the institute and of the discipline.

Trends in Teaching Literature

by

Arthur M. Eastman

University of Michigan

> Placed at the door of Learning, youth to guide,
> We never suffer it to stand too wide.
> To ask, to guess, to know, as they commence,
> As Fancy opens the quick springs of Sense,
> We ply the Memory, we load the brain,
> Bind rebel Wit, and double chain on chain;
> Confine the thought, to exercise the breath;
> And keep them in the pale of Words till death.
>
> Pope, Dunciad, IV. 153-160

I do not like the embarrassment of beginning my report with an apology, but one is in order. I am not an expert in the topic assigned me: Trends in the Teaching of Literature. I am no student of trends. I am slow to recognize them until they are as public as the plague or as dead as last year's teach-in. I neither visit schools nor peruse curriculum outlines, study guides, and course descriptions. I am far from confident that I can describe the trends of teaching literature even in my own department.

I am here because I was at Dartmouth last summer. I participated for four weeks, day and night, in the deliberations of the International Seminar on English. I made my own contributions to the Seminar's confusions and perhaps to its order. I think I know something of what happened there, what was going on beneath the surface, what kinds of voices were trying to be heard--and were heard. And if the Dartmouth Seminar turns out to have been one of the turning points in the history of our profession--one of those moments when some kind of new world, preferably brave, comes into being--then perhaps I can speak about the trends--if not so much those of the present, then of those to come.

To make no mystery about it, I think two trends-to-be were foreshadowed at Dartmouth. One was the teaching of literature as an engaging with life; the other was the teaching of literature through the instrumentalities of linguistics. You might call the one the new Deweyism, the other, the new grammar. There were hints of other trends-to-be, but these were the main ones and on these I shall focus, reminding you that the trends are not ultimately new but very, very old.

I

To say that the teaching and reading of literature should be an engaging with life, a living, means little unless one is aware of the repudiated alternatives. The people at Dartmouth were saying, ever louder, that the teaching of literature should not in any central way be a study of structure, an analysis of imagery, a description of metrics. It should not be an introduction to the great tradition nor the taking possession of English and

American masterpieces in prose and verse, nor a study of the history of literature nor even an initiation into the appreciation of individual authors and works.

All of these things matter, of course. Without them, where would the textbook industry be? Or the curriculum? Or most of our colleagues? But to all these "good" things the Dartmouth Seminarians said, "Get thee behind me."

The British said it most often, and as we came to know them, we began to see why. Early on we grew to like Tony Adams, a diminutive Welshman who bore himself with the perky erectness of a cock sparrow and spoke with the unfaltering articulateness of a pebbled Demosthenes. Tony is the Head of the English Department of Churchfields Comprehensive School. His special bailiwick is dramatics. And in his bailiwick he is obviously good. He is not concerned with theater, nor for a long time with the literary study of dramatic texts. He is primarily interested in helping youngsters find and free and enlarge themselves, alone and in the dynamics of groups, through rhythmic movement, through gesture, through role-playing, through improvised interchange of speech and action. To hear him describe his own teaching is invariably a delight. Obviously he feels for the awkwardness of the shy and helps them through their embarrassments. Gradually he develops in his classes an atmosphere of creative freedom--which is not to deny either discipline or quiet leadership, but to insist on an easy readiness to slip from the restraints of proper personas and usual decorums. No longer is the child confined to the behavior of his responsible and socio-historically limited self. In the great open world of mimesis he tries out voices, puts on personalities, explores gestures. He experiences a story, finds within himself different reactions to the same situation, lives out one, then another--alone and with other children who do the same, each getting to know the voices within himself, the voices within the group, the nature of the interactions between them. The child enlarges his sympathy, sharpens his perception, hones his morality. For him the world becomes richer and his own nature far better known. By his teaching Tony Adams helps his students find their way toward the Socratic goal of the examined life.

But ask Tony what he does with his students as the O-level examination looms on their horizon, and his face falls, for that term the dramatics pretty much stop and the creativity shrivels. For a term he drills his charges on the novels which the examining authorities have announced as the matter in hand for the coming trials. Tony drills them. They get to know Great Expectations so well that, given a spot passage, they can place it within a paragraph or two of its precise place in the text. They know all the facts there are to know about Great Expectations--the names and histories of characters, the articulation of scenes, the main descriptive passages, the literary devices, the evolving ironies, etc. And obviously they, and Tony, are corrupted in the process--and corrupted too are the teaching of, the reading of literature. No longer is it power; it is now mere knowledge. No longer is it freedom; it is now fetters. Great expectations turn out to be very very small.

Tony teaches creative dramatics in the schools; Barbara Hardy teaches the nineteenth and twentieth century novel at the University of London. She is sharp, sensitive, completely committed to the teaching of literature. In many ways she thinks as Tony does. Tony hates the aboutness with which the examination system curses his teaching of literature and his students' response

to it. Barbara does likewise. She knows the bright young minds who have come through the A stream, the top level students as sorted out by the examinations. She knows too well how they have learned to talk about literature, to speak knowingly of its shape and dynamics, its history and merit. Every one of them can pen a new-critical essay on a poem, unraveling the play of images, the prosodic variations, the tonal modulations. But literature is for all too many of them mere commodity, something out there, to be dealt with by the mechanism of their minds, not entered into with the fear and hope of their spirits.

Even if Tony and Barbara were isolated voices, they would deserve to be heard. But they spoke <u>for</u> their compatriots. Everywhere we heard from the British discontent at the otherness in the teaching of literature which their examination system enforces by practical reward. And we learned from the British a pair of pejoratives which at first amused us, then made us wince. The pejoratives were "lit. crit." and "lit. hist." Initially they sounded like mere collegiate truncations, the diminutives by which fond familiarity reduces "quadrangle" to "quad" and "university" to "varsity." But the more we heard the British using these terms--mockingly, sneeringly, mincingly ("lit. crit." "lit. hist.")--the more we realized that no fondness was intended. And I recall the evening when I had spoken, as I thought, reasonably clearly about something and was greeted afterward with the jeering question, "When did you fall for that 'lit. crit.' stuff?"

In the beginning, I think we Americans felt that the British problem was peculiarly British, the product of their infamous system of examinations. It seemed to us that in their reaction against the perversions of their system they had lost their sense of balance. So severely had they been burned by the drilling and cramming that they flinched at every suggestion of planned curricula or agreed-upon lists of major works, of Advanced Placement or College Board Testing. At one time, so exacerbated were their wounded sensitivities that they objected to someone's speaking of teaching as a proper function of the teacher, teaching having become for them the mindless indoctrinating practised by and upon the victims of the prevailing system.

About the third day of the Seminar, however, Ben DeMott, Chairman of the Department of English at Amherst, satirist of contemporary idiocies, and until then silent sufferer at the proceedings--Ben DeMott erupted. For twenty minutes in a plenary session shocked into silence, he whooped and he whispered, he scolded and derided the Seminar, the profession, the field. He outdid the British. And later on he put it into writing. Here is the way he began:

> Apathetes shrug at the fact, mandarins may mumble about exaggeration and melodrama, but the plain case is that the profession of English teaching appears to some of us at this moment to be nearing a crisis.
>
> Earnest, intelligent teachers by the tens of thousands in school and college English classrooms find themselves in a situation offering them only the slimmest chance, if any, of using their gifts and abilities to serious effect. And no agency or professional spokesman provides help. The work of the Commission on English in America issues in blandness. Project English, numberless institutes of English teacher retraining or of curriculum development, operated with and without government support, are wholly conformist in approach, seldom daring to question community and professional platitudes about "appropriate" methods and aims. And

as for the official Establishment "reform movement," it has dwindled into sweet compilations of "good books for all ages," filmstrips on matters ranging from the nature of literary tone to lavatory facilities at the Globe theater, over-financed conferences, and prayers to the New Magic (computer technology, teaching machines) for cures for bad spelling, comma splicing, every famous sin. Nothing in this labor, nothing in the published statements of the leaders of the profession, gives ground for hope that the English classroom will escape much longer public damnation as the number one disaster area in the Anglo-American school and college....

It's one thing to acknowledge the puerility of most comments on English teaching, and another to conclude that a fair account of conditions as they are--an assessment that at least strives to be impersonal--is impossible. The right starting point of such a survey is, in truth, anything but obscure: it is, as I've hinted, the English teacher's forced retreat to the periphery of his subject, his inability to escape his community and profession-imposed obligation to triviality --an obligation to names not things, apparatus not inquiry, the window rather than the view.

What exactly does this mean? It means that the English teacher is not continually and primarily and unrelentingly engaged in the activity of encouraging students to find the bearing of this book and that poem and this "composition" on their own lives. He is unable to give himself to the labor of drawing men into an effort to reflect upon and seek to understand their own experience (a labor that art--and student composition --make much easier). It means that he himself goes on mouthing the traditional slogans about his subject--goes on announcing the supreme relevance of literature to the development of character, identity, imagination, responsiveness to life, goes on declaring that books do "connect" --yet in his day-to-day teaching concentrates on other matters.

What with the British and Ben DeMott, things were looking bad for us Americans. Our consciences began to squirm. And some of us thought back to William Arrowsmith's blast in Harper's at "The Shame of the Graduate Schools" and his "Plea for a New American Scholar." Arrowsmith, you may recall, said that he did "not regard graduate education in the humanities as pure poison," but he did regard "the degree of poison in the graduate system" as "alarming enough to justify calling countermeasures antidotes or purges." "Our present system of graduate education," he said--the system that trains up the teachers of literature in the colleges, who train up the teachers of literature in the schools--"our present system...is so much the creature of vested interests and dead tradition, contains so much sheer automatism, snobbery, and prejudice, and so little pertinence to the real needs of men, that any conceivably effective antidote would be too radical to be tolerated by its custodians and beneficiaries."[1]

The Americans at Dartmouth were not Miss Grobys, grubbing about for figures of speech, propagandizing for dead literary monuments. Like the crowd here, we were, I think, able, dedicated, and passionate. We taught literature because we lived it, because it engaged us in the actualities of our experience. But we sensed in our profession how much talk went to the secondary at the expense of the primary, how much we get caught up in subtle exegesis, in proliferating

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[1]William Arrowsmith, "The Shame of the Graduate Schools: a Plea for a New American Scholar," Harper's Magazine, CCXXXII (March, 1966), 51-59, at p. 51.

ambiguities, in comfortable taxonomies. And good enough though we individually might be, like the scribes and pharisees around the woman taken in adultery, each knew some guilt in his own heart, some death in his own doing.

And so we went out from that place committed to a return to our primal business. We would help our students grow through literature before--long before--we tried to teach them about it. Literature would be doors through which they walked, atmosphere they breathed, emotions they felt, actions they performed. It would be the feeling about love and a red, red rose, the compressed fury at the chartered streets of a modern city, the Hamletian paralysis before an ambivalent act. It would be character played out on the pulses of the class and ethical questions faced up to with true ingenuousness.

In one of the curriculum guides you bring to these meetings, there is a discussion of Keats's "When I have fears that I may cease to be." The teacher is asked to inform his students that the young Keats who wrote the poem was tubercular and hence actually worried about death. Does not the knowledge, the teacher is to ask, affect and deepen your response to the lines? And we from Dartmouth would say, let the student himself contemplate his own death and the loss of the goods of being and becoming by which he lives, and let his own experience open the poem to him--and let the poem open his own experience. Let him live it.

If the Dartmouth folks carry the gospel, the teaching of literature will be (again) an engaging with life. This is the first trend.

II

To get at the second, the complementary engaging with literature through the instrumentalities of linguistics, I shall again proceed historically, if more briefly, but let me say at the outset that I am here less sure of my ground. When I speak of literature as living, I speak from knowledge. When I speak of linguistics as a way of getting into literature, I speak from faith.

Again, the British as British had something to do with it. Their people from Education--Jimmy Britton, Hal Rosen, Connie Rosen--and their people especially concerned with the teaching of the very young and the disadvantaged--David Holbrook, Sybil Marshall--made the secondary and college teachers among us aware, as I, for one, had long since ceased being aware, that the world of English masterpieces from Beowulf to Auden is but a small part of the world of English, the tip of a pinnacle so far away from most of those who use English as to be out of sight. They made us recognize that English through the lower grades is not a subject and is far more than knowledge and skill. It is the instrument by which one takes in and gives out experience. It is the very medium of human thought and communication. They made us see that to speak of English and mean Shakespeare is, in a crucial way, to be provincial. What is a sonnet to the disadvantaged slum child? What meaningful English can the ghetto hear in the Rape of the Lock or the Wreck of the Deutschland?

We in the upper echelons of the teaching of English literature had to enlarge our definition of English, to be more sensitive to it as language, with all that that might mean. That was one thing we learned. We learned another from the linguists. That is another, more painful story.

We had at Dartmouth a distinguished crowd of linguists. Nelson Francis was there and David Abercrombie, Fred Cassidy, David MacKay, Al Marckwardt, Wayne

O'Neil, John Sinclair, and Barbara Strang. But with a few signal exceptions, they seemed somehow not to get in the center of things. As a matter of fact, they seemed to be cordially distant, smilingly grumpy.[2] They would drink cocktails together and feel unwanted; they would sip wine with their dinner and feel unloved. As the evening's potations wore on, several would become bitter at the lit. crit. and lit. hist. people and at the massive failure of the Seminar to seize upon their merit. To descend to particulars here would be to descend to gossip, but I might instance the experience one of them recounted in an aggrieved voice of his department's regularly failing to invite him to its meetings. It was an English department and they just didn't feel that a linguist, albeit a Chaucerian, would either be interested or competent.

The linguists played Achilles in his sullen tent. The rest of us regretted it and resented it and wished they'd come out and show us what they could do. So the Seminar wore on, tighter and tenser, like a spring winding up, until the Friday of the third week, when the plenary session was devoted to "Standards and Attitudes." It was the linguists' show. Even now it's hard to get back exactly what happened. But it seemed to some of us as if the linguists were merely speaking for updated exercises of the old spirit-breaking kind. It seemed as though they wanted to replace the old dead grammar with a grammar new but no less dead. Of course it wasn't that at all, but all the frustration about the teaching of literature I have described, all the hostility of the British examining system, all the irritation at the linguists came out in an extraordinary and almost total misunderstanding. Comments from the audience began as questions and ended up as taunts. Civilized men and women insulted each other as though the new barbarism were about to begin. And indeed, it was like that act in the ritual underlying Greek tragedy called the sparagmos, the tearing apart of the sacrificial victim. When it was over, we were bruised and sore at heart.

Over that final weekend, however, something happened. John Dixon, Senior Lecturer at Bretton Hall College of Education and one of the two scribes whose task it has since been to write the history of the Seminar--John Dixon arranged a contest between Wallace Robson, Fellow of Lincoln College, Oxford, and author of Critical Essays,[3] and John Sinclair, Professor of Modern English Language at Birmingham. Robson was the critic, Sinclair the linguist. And the contest was a reading, that is, an interpretive analysis, of a poem (Robert Graves's "The Legs") selected by Dixon and sprung upon them both. I was not at the convergence of this twain--did not indeed know about it--and few did. But at the final session of the Seminar these two combatants were able to arise and speak for each other. Each testified that the other had enlarged his view, strengthened his understanding. They bore witness for each other. The Seminar sighed sweetly and produced, with scarcely a dissenting voice, its communique.

The striking thing about the communique (or press release) was its focus upon English as language rather than as literature. The words "literature" and "literary" and such ancillary belletristic terms as "play," "novel," "poem," "essay" did not appear in the first edition of the release and appeared in the final version only in an afterthought item about "rich literary experiences."

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[2]In this paragraph I indulge in some hyperbole for which, since I do not wish to give it up, I herewith dutifully apologize.

[3]William Wallace Robson, Critical Essays (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, Ltd., 1966).

The central terms of the release were "experience," "language experience," "creative uses of language," "linguistic environment," "English," "scholarship and research in the English language," and "good English and good English teaching." That final collocation, good English and good English teaching, may serve as symbolic of them all, for--though you and I know that good English teaching means teaching English well, and that English is language and literature, reading, writing, thinking, talking--in the context it carries the overtone of teaching good English, that is, the language.

Quite clearly all this includes more than the new linguistic approaches to English, more than the new structural or transformational or tagmemic grammars, but it's on this area of the subject I wish to focus, for the evidence already mounts as to its importance. Not only did we respond to Sinclair's contributions to Robson's interpretation of Graves's poem, but we knew, some of us, Dick Ohmann's book Shaw: the Style and the Man[4] and how it had used the criteria and methodology of structural linguistics to discover new things to see and say. We had heard that Ohmann was to take Jim Miller's place as editor of College English and could be expected to give new prominence to linguistic explorations of literature. We knew, some of us from a single experience, some from many, that the linguists had in their hands an heuristic instrument, a device for discovery, a mechanism (to use the old rhetorical term)--a mechanism for invention. It would find increasing use and make increasing contributions, in the years ahead, to the study and teaching of literature.

III

These are the two trends I am able to infer from the experience at Dartmouth. The two are manifestly complementary. One eschews system and apparatus in its search for the raw pulse; the other depends on system and apparatus to find the raw pulse. The trends are complementary, and neither is new. They are, in fact, reformational, recurring attempts across the generations to get the teaching of literature back where, imaginably, it once was. Writers engage an audience, books engage a reader. But between the original literary experience and the classroom falls a shadow. Changing times, places, idioms, and languages distance the literary work. Individual and institutional sloth find that it takes less energy to know names, biographies, definitions, and the clichés of approved taste than to re-engage with the life to which literature opens the way. Repeatedly we lose the life; again and again we require reform. So, thirty and forty years ago, the New Criticism led us out of the wilderness of academic otherness. So, today and tomorrow, perhaps the new Deweyism of Dartmouth may lead us out from beneath the present shadow.

The same set of generalizations applies equally to the new grammars. Their newness is in part that they do again what the old grammars did once before. They offer a means of discovery, of finding. They are tools to think with. But the dead, old, schoolroom grammar was the same thing in its day. Its sentence types and clausal relations were grids one could set against experience and see with. Consider but the conjunctions alone. Within the categories of coordination and subordination they set up relations of addition, repetition, contrast cause, consequence, condition, and so forth. What are these but a series of perspectives, like Aristotle's four causes or Hegel's thesis-antithesis-synthesis,

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[4]Richard Ohmann, Shaw: the Style and the Man (Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan University Press, 1962).

by which a thinker may discover what he knows and might come to know about the matter in hand? The old grammar was splendidly heuristic in its freshness, but it followed the inevitable law that reduces heuristics to taxonomies and the dynamics of exploration to the meticulous dust-gathering of museum custody. And so the new grammars come into being to join the new Deweyism in an era of literary reformation. The two together promise to lead us into the fray, into the place where, in the present idiom, the literary action is--back, that is to say, into life.

Trends in Teaching Language

by

Harold B. Allen

University of Minnesota

Probably nowhere else in the entire academic world is there as much soul-searching and breast-beating as among us who teach what we call English. No other profession--if English is indeed a profession--has so deliberately and unequivocally exposed its shortcomings and inadequacies not only to its own practitioners but also to the concerned public.

In 1961, some of you will recall, the National Council of Teachers of English published a frankly unvarnished study of these inadequacies in the report The National Interest and the Teaching of English. This investigation had an equally frank sequel, The National Interest and the Continuing Education of Teachers of English. Fred Hechinger of the New York Times commented that never before had a professional group manifested the courage to make public such an honest self-appraisal. Hechinger's comment led me to ask several colleagues in other departments whether their disciplines had ever undergone similar study and publicity. The answer was always No. One colleague in the University of Minnesota Medical School looked at The National Interest and laughed incredulously. "Can you imagine," he asked, "the American Medical Association making public any such study of the medical teaching profession?" Well, I couldn't imagine that very easily, but I remarked that it seemed a good idea for all academic professions to follow NCTE's example if they had the same purpose in making the study.

For the National Council did not search the soul of the profession in the mood of the unknown author of the Poema Morale bewailing his misspent youth; it did not exemplify either the stoical resignation of Job or the despair of Jeremiah. These studies were not lamentations; they were clarion calls for action. Each weakness was a demand for a specific remedy. The National Council was concerned with the past only as a guide to the future. It was concerned with problems only because they required solutions. It was concerned, briefly, with improving the teaching and the teachers of English in the United States.

This improvement is now taking place. It is impelled by the National Council, the Commission on English of the College Entrance Examination Board, the College English Association, the Modern Language Association, and the Center for Applied Linguistics. It is supported by the United States Office of Education through a variety of means and methods--these NDEA Institutes, generous grants for research, and the activities of the various regional educational laboratories. It has appeared locally in the activity of curriculum councils and the work of state departments of education and their consultants. Your very presence here today witnesses your own belief in the possibility of continued improvement.

Now much of this overwhelming ferment of activity characterizing the field of English these past seven years has certainly aimed at improvement. Yet rarely in all this time have I heard raised any voices advocating the point of

view I believe we all must hold before general improvement can occur in all areas and aspects of our profession. It is a point of view I urge here today for your serious consideration. It is a point of view I insist we must have if we can give a fundamental answer to the question, "What is English?"

I

Some sixty years ago an eastern professor--I think it was Thomas Lounsbury of Yale--described the English profession as having three discrete parts: language, literature, and composition. This plausible description apparently raised no controversy and aroused no opposition. Indeed, it enjoyed the quiet oblivion of acceptance by lip service for the next half-century. Then during the Basic Issues Conferences of 1959 this curious tripartite view of English attracted new attention as a pronouncement of the Commission on English, a pronouncement that was instrumental in determining the patterns of the CEEB summer institutes of 1962 and of many of the subsequent NDEA Institutes in English. The triad now is familiar to most of us through fairly frequent reference in the flood of articles on English.

I submit to you that this analysis of English as having three discrete parts is basically unsound and that acceptance of this analysis prevents recognition of certain fundamental facts and relationships in the field of English. It is true that some of those accepting the analysis have been uneasy about its fallaciousness and have tried various devices to modify the description. Recently, for example, one writer accepting the three-part division sought to visualize it not only by symbolizing English as a triangle but also by drawing misleading little circles at the corners of the triangle to suggest that each of the three divisions is related to, even impinges upon, both of the others.

Certainly there is a relationship, but it is not the superficial one found in such a description. It is a relation apparent when we ask ourselves simply which of the three divisions must be present if either or both of the others is to be present. Literature cannot exist without language. Composition cannot exist without language. But language can exist without literature, and language can exist without composition.

What then is English? English is the study of the English language and of its use as a medium of communication. That terse definition may be expanded so as to say that the use of the language includes all instances from the most trivial utterance or simplest direction to the most majestic productions of our literature, both spoken and written, both as produced and as received.

What else brings together in one college department the linguist, the rhetorician, the teacher of freshman English, the literary historian, and the teacher of literature--what else but the English language? The teacher of literature is a teacher of English when the literature which he teaches is written, not in French or Chinese or Arabic, but in English. The teacher of composition is a teacher of English when the principles of composition that he teaches result in writing, not in French or Chinese or Arabic, but in English. The teacher of language is a teacher of English when the language study that he offers is not that of French or Arabic or Chinese but of English. And I should like to add that a teacher of speech, despite the political and

administrative divisions that have arisen since 1915, is also a teacher of English when the speech that he teaches is English speech. The study and the use of the English language--this is for us the tie that binds; this is the unum necessarium, the one solid underlying fundamental truth of our profession. It is, I would insist, a truth that must be recognized if we are professional.

Now accepting this fact has implications. One is that the English language is a focal area in the entire scope and sequence of the English curriculum--the language as content to be studied both for its own sake and for its relevance to its use in literature and in the students' speaking and writing. The other is that the language itself, this content, must be dealt with in its own broad scope rather than in terms of a narrow consideration proposed by some current emphasis.

In this talk I want to look, then, at language as content in the curriculum, not as it has been but as it is today in some schools and as it will be tomorrow in a great many more. I cannot here be concerned with how to break up the content in the curriculum sequence. I am not a curriculum specialist nor an educational psychologist. But without regard for the assignment or the distribution of any specific language content within the curriculum, it is clear that today we are in a period of transition from an absence of language content except that concealed within prescriptive regulations to what I hope will be the ultimate stage of full language content correlated carefully with the other areas of English.

The irreducible responsibility of the teacher of English--and of those who prepare teachers of English--would then have to be that of keeping up with the change during the period of transition. More desirable would be recognition of the responsibility of being ready for the stage language teaching will be in tomorrow and next year and the year after that. The least the teacher should be able to do would be to use text materials already in print; better would be ability to use the texts that will appear when present publishing outlines are realized as textbooks.

The language content that is both the professional property and the responsibility of the teacher of English is easily considered under two headings: (1) language as system, and (2) language as a means of communication involving producer and receiver in a physical setting in time.

II

Let us consider language as system. And let us say arbitrarily here that any set of statements describing that system, telling how it functions, is a grammar.

Now until quite recently--recently to me if not to some of you--the schools made available a grammar that actually revealed very little about the language system. It is true that in classical Latin grammar some statements can be interpreted as recognition of the systematic nature of language, but by the time classical grammar became transmuted into a set of statements telling what to say and what not to say there remained very little evidence of the existence of the language as system.

This Grammar A, as I sometimes call it, provided definitions to be memorized--definitions that were descriptive perhaps but non-operational--and rules prescribing how to speak and write in the best society. That the definitions didn't define and the rules didn't reflect actual usage was not a matter of concern to most teachers. They were in the book and they were going to be taught--willy-nilly.

Yet to the preceding generation of teachers--though unknown to most of them--was available another great body of statements about the language system of English. These statements did at least imply the nature of language as system, and they were much closer to an honest description of actual practices in speech and in writing. These statements, Grammar B, used the same terminology as did Grammar A, but were supported with a vast array of examples and interpretation and much sharper insights. These are the grammatical statements found in the work of Otto Jespersen, Henry Sweet, Henry Poutsma, and R. W. Zandvoort. A teacher today should not be without some awareness of that great wealth of information derived from the scholarship of the nineteenth and early twentieth century. It is a resource that no other English grammar has yet been able to emulate, let alone duplicate. No Institute course in the language would be adequate, it might well be said, if it did not call the students' attention to, say, Jespersen's Essentials of English Grammar or the more recent and somewhat fuller work by Zandvoort.

But as the transition period began in the schools it was a third grammar, Grammar C, that aroused attention and caused sometimes acrimonious controversy. Grammar C in the schools is derived largely from the descriptive linguistic studies of Leonard Bloomfield and his followers. Their need to study language at first hand led some anthropologists to work out a method for describing the way a language works without having to go back to the models of Latin or Greek for grammatical terms and categories. Finding themselves unable to apply precision methods to matters of meaning, they postponed meaning as something to be studied and instead dealt exclusively with the structure of the system itself. Hence the later designation "structural linguistics" and "structural grammar." The structural grammarian was tremendously occupied with arriving at objective and rigorous methods of classifying the phenomena of language, and with setting up strict categories upon the basis of structural features, that is, of form and position. But not all structural grammarians proceeded in the same way even though they all owed their central principles to Leonard Bloomfield. Bloomfield had clearly described three levels in a language system. One is the level of classes of sounds that function similarly in a given language. These classes are the phonemes, and the level is the phonemic level. The second is the level of meaningful groupings of phonemes. These groups are the words and various kinds of affixes in English. They are called morphemes, and the level is the morphemic level. The third level is that of groups of words--the level of phrases and clauses and the sentence. This is the syntactic level. Some structural linguists, particularly Henry Lee Smith, Jr. and George L. Trager and their followers, were insistent that the study of one level should be kept separate from the study of another level, and that the beginning level should be that of the phoneme. It took quite a while--from 1951 until 1958--for these grammarians to get from the phoneme to the syntax. Other structural linguists, particularly Kenneth Pike and his followers, relied pragmatically upon a vast experience of field work with unwritten language to support the position that the study of one level proceeds constantly by reference to one

or two other levels. They thus tended to put more emphasis upon the relationship of one level to the next, a fact of significance when we see the later emergence of another new grammar, tagmemics.

It was 1956 before structural grammar filtered down into the secondary schools with the publication of Paul Robert's Patterns of English, a textbook that drew upon the phonemic analysis of Smith and Trager and upon the word-class and sentence analysis of Charles C. Fries, whose book The Structure of English in 1952 had dealt only with form-classes and syntax.

Structural grammar has had rather hard going in the schools even though it was the beginning of the transition to language content. For one thing, it presented language information as information instead of as rules of behavior. That annoyed teachers and disturbed parents. For another, it ignored what to the average person--teacher or not--is what language is all about, that is, meaning. Yet it did provide understandable devices for classifying parts of speech; it did--particularly with its classification of structures provided by W. Nelson Francis--make clear English's remarkable characteristic of structural replacement potential; it did provide therefore a way for students to move toward that syntactic control that Fries in 1940 had declared is the basis of mature prose style; and it provided not only one but two phonemic analyses--those of Smith and of Pike--for recording speech and thus identifying its systematic features.

This was all to the good, actually, and the gradual acceleration of the slow progress structural grammar was making in the schools might within the next ten years have led to widespread acceptance had not another development occurred to divert the transitional direction. That this development did occur should not, however, lead the teacher or prospective teacher to overlook the value of some understanding of structural grammar. A number of school systems were able to introduce structural grammar, sometimes with either commercial textbooks or with their own materials. For years to come a teacher is likely to encounter books and articles that are either entirely structural or are in part structural. The information to be found, then, in such grammars as those by W. Nelson Francis and Norman Stageberg is essential and valuable information for the classroom teacher of English.

It is perhaps ironic that just as structural grammar was beginning to establish a firm foothold its position should be threatened by what some people see as a complete replacement for it. The teacher who has some acquaintance with Grammar C and this new development, Grammar D, may well find, however, that in the classroom one grammar will supplement the other and not entirely replace it.

People who invent or discover something new are quite understandably excited about their discovery. The structuralist was excited about his way of describing the language, and at first was intolerant of any older ideas found in Grammar A or Grammar B. It seemed to the young linguists of the late 1930's that they were finding all the right answers; they had a kind of pipeline to God's immortal truth. But now they in turn, a generation older, are confronted with a new set of young linguists with a quite different way of looking at language, a way they are convinced is superior to any other way. Perhaps, but the schools need not succumb to the first wave of enthusiasm for a new discovery. They can be eclectic.

This new way of looking at language is known as transformational generative grammar. It contrasts sharply with structural grammar. Structural grammar operates essentially in terms of the classification and interpretation of language data as found. In a given sentence or set of sentences the structuralist will find sounds he groups into phonemes, various forms he will group into morphemes, and various combinations of morphemes he will classify as types of syntactic structure. The structuralist, then, deals with the collecting and the classification of data, but he collects and classifies according to rigid and consistent criteria that are applied objectively, not subjectively.

The generative grammarian, on the other hand, is concerned less with the overt and superficial features of our language, with what has been called superficial or surface grammar, than he is with underlying relationships, what he calls deep grammar. He is concerned with making explicit the relationship a native speaker senses but cannot easily describe between such pairs as these: a sharp pencil/ the pencil is sharp : He smoked a cigar/ I saw him smoking a cigar : I'm going to the store/ Where are you going? : He is a fool/ She called him a fool : New York's air pollution is increasing/ New York has air pollution.

These relationships in English appear to be best shown by a set of statements indicating that one member of the pair is a transformation of the other member. The inclusion of rules specifying such transformations in a generative grammar gives it the name transformational grammar. Any generative grammar has for its ultimate purpose the provision of rules by which the acceptable sentences of a language can be generated or accounted for. (Let me say parenthetically that <u>generate</u> does not here mean <u>produce</u>; it simply means account for the existence of.) A generative grammar with transformational rules, such as that being worked out by Noam Chomsky and his followers, is a transformational generative grammar--or transformational grammar for short.

Essentially the transformationalists operate deductively rather than inductively. They move from a basic theory and not from observed data, even though their basic theory must function within the framework of their individual speech or idiolect. Every native speaker of English past the initial stages of speech is assumed by the transformationalists to have control of a few basic patterns or kernels the existence of which can be explained by the working of some rather simple rules that make increasingly explicit the fundamental notion of sentence. An elementary example would be that S, a symbol for the sentence concept, is made more explicit by rewriting it as NP + VP, symbols representing noun phrase and verb phrase. VP then might be still more explicit by being rewritten as V + NP, or verb plus a noun phrase that could be the direct object. Each additional rule in the series moves the description one step farther toward such a string of elements (actually morphemes) as Some + boy + pl + like + spinach which then becomes <u>Some boys like spinach</u>. These initial rules are simple and are in accord with the analysis of structural grammar.

It is the transformational rules that make Grammar D a very powerful grammar, for it is their operation upon kernel sentences that presumably accounts for all the intricate sentences that can be found or that may yet be found in the language, in, for example, mature prose. I have already

referred to Fries's recognition of bad prose as essentially characterized by syntactic inadequacy, and pointed out that structural grammar seems to be useful as a device to make the student aware of the potential of syntactic substitution and hence improve his own writing. But clearly transformational grammar offers stronger tools in that it enables the student to see the underlying steps that account for good sentences and it enables the teacher and textbook writer to help the student practice those steps until some habitual control is gained. Now the transformationalists themselves make no claim for the value of their grammar in the improvement of writing. Yet Donald Bateman and Frank Zidonis have been carrying on experimental work in the Ohio State University high school that does suggest the pedagogical value of transformational grammar. I rather think that future experimental work with better materials will lead to even more positive results.

I would be remiss to my central position, however, if I did not insist that the prime validity of transformational grammar for us lies in its providing new and deeper insights into the functioning of our language. To acquire deeper insight into this amazingly intricate and yet disarmingly simple system we call the English language is a worthy educational objective. Improvement of writing, if it results, is a fringe benefit. The teacher of English today needs an understanding of this grammar, then, in order to be more professional, to have greater command of the basic content of English, the language. He needs this understanding in order to select and use effectively in class the new grammatical materials that are transformationally oriented.

But powerful and useful as it is, transformational grammar is not quite the ultimate distillation of God's truth that its noisier advocates take it to be. Our language is a many-splendored thing, and no one grammar will probably ever be sufficient to depict all its splendors or to serve all the purposes of a language description.

Another grammar, Grammar E, has been developed by Kenneth Pike out of his earlier insistence upon describing the relationships between structural levels. He has developed the concept of the tagmeme, the relationship between the syntactic position in a sentence and whatever language elements typically can occupy that position. Pike's grammar, known as tagmemics, has not yet found its way into secondary school textbooks, but it is being applied to the teaching of composition in college; and a college tagmemic composition text is about ready to come from a long experimental development program at the University of Michigan. Surely the teacher needs some awareness of what tagmemic grammar is.

From tagmemic grammar there has now been developed still another grammar, which its designer, Robert Allen of Teachers College, Columbia, has called sectoral grammar. Grammar F, sectoral grammar, is now described in detail in a college undergraduate textbook, and it is the basis for a series of textbook materials Allen is now testing in New York and New Jersey schools.

Although still without any applications in elementary or secondary schools, another grammar concerned with relationships in syntax but with a quite different analysis of them has been exciting attention among linguists the past three or four years. This grammar, stratificational grammar or Grammar G, was first set forth by Sydney Lamb, now at Yale University. In some ways it holds especial promise for ultimate use in the schools, for it is the first grammar to attempt to deal systematically with what the English teacher is closely concerned with,

the meaning of words. The first book describing it, Outline of Stratificational Grammar, was published last year by Georgetown University. Because of the likelihood of secondary applications within a few years, this grammar, too, calls for some understanding by the teacher.

I have suggested a clear overall trend toward the introduction of grammatical material--especially structural and transformational grammar--in the school curriculum, material that is studied for its own sake and only incidentally because of any possible beneficial effect upon students' use of English.

Within that trend the strongest current today is that toward the inclusion of material taken from the rapidly expanding set of rules that constitute transformational grammar. The existence of this current, however, must not be intrepreted as evidence that this is the only current or that for the schools there ever should be only a single current. It is understandable that the person who invents or devises a new grammar or the theory for a new grammar will be an ardent proponent of that theory and that grammar. It is understandable that his graduate students become equally ardent disciples, but it is at the same time regrettable that some of these disciples and other followers overstate their case in advancing their views to the exclusion of others. It is still true that "all grammars leak."

III

In this brief glance at available grammars of English I have been considering language as system. Now we turn to the second of our two headings: language as a means of communication involving producer and receiver in a physical setting in time. You have recently heard, I'm sure, the expression "the New English." I would insist that if this expression has real validity for the teaching of English it must refer to this second heading as well as to language as system. It is to the study of language as a means of communication that the schools must turn for much of the content that should be central in our discipline.

As a means of human communication the English language is something that human beings learn as infants. It may well be true, as Noam Chomsky and others believe, that man has an innate propensity for language. There may be language universals. But what distinguishes English as English is learned. Much of what is said about language learning is still speculative, but that which is fairly well affirmed is, I should think, worth some attention both in teacher-training and in the schools. That is why the Minnesota Project English materials have such a unit. Some understanding of how the system and its symbols are learned prevents the development of absolutism with respect to language matters, particularly those of usage.

The interdisciplinary field concerned with language learning theory is called psycholinguistics. The psycholinguist is providing new information about the learning of the system. I think, for instance of the recent research of George A. Miller and L. E. McMahon of Harvard into the development of negative sentences. I think of the more extensive studies, by Roger W. Brown and Ursula Bellugi, of the child's acquisition of the syntactic structures of English. Their findings are important information for the English teacher and are also significant for the student.

The psycholinguist is also providing new information about the relationships between words and meaning--semantics (not general semantics). The several types of relationships, and how they undergo change, have long been described, but such recent approaches as that represented by Charles Osgood's theory of the semantic differential throw new light on the subject. This light in turn is reflected in the teaching and understanding of literature, prose and verse, where problems of meaning are often major obstacles for the student.

This more fundamental way of approaching word-meaning is a doorway through which students can be led to the field of lexicography. Recent experimental and textbook materials have begun, therefore, to include chapters or units on the nature of the dictionary and on its history. Students obtain a much clearer perception of the role of the modern commercial dictionary, such as Webster's Third, if they know something of its beginning in the medieval glossaries, the bilingual precursors of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the early lexicons of Cawdrey, Bullokar, and Cockeram, the first modern dictionary by Bailey, the significant advances found in Johnson's Dictionary and the early Webster's and the enormous contributions to lexicographical theory and practice made by the Oxford English Dictionary and its American supplements, the Dictionary of American English and the Dictionary of Americanisms. No teacher or student with such information could present such a curiously uninformed attitude as was publicly revealed a few years ago by such figures as Dwight MacDonald and Jacques Barzun in their attacks on Webster's Third New International.

Recognition of meaning as new language content leads also to attention to language varieties occasioned by social and geographical factors. A speaker of English uses his language in a variety of social situations--formal and informal, and with a variety of purposes involving a variety of reactions from the listener. How language varies in these situations is part of the content we need to teach. Some of these differences actually constitute a different social dialect, and about this kind of difference we can draw a store of information and new insights into the relationships between language forms and cultural groups, particularly those unhappily labeled "the culturally disadvantaged."

The variety in space calls for attention to not only the distinctive features of American English as a whole in contrast with those of British English but also the distinctive features of American regional varieties. Here the linguistic geographer provides material of exciting interest in the secondary classroom. The National Council of Teachers of English has already published the little pamphlet Dialects: USA and is about to publish another, both of which are directed at student use.

How American English got to be what it is calls for attention to its history, and once we begin to look at that then we need to consider the entire history of the English language. Some consideration has been given to this in the past, but chiefly with respect to vocabulary growth and borrowing; today more and more emphasis is being put upon the internal history, the history of the long, slow change from the period with inflections as chief structural signals to the present time with syntactic arrangement providing the chief structural signals.

Long as this talk may have seemed to you, it has been all too short to do justice to this powerful new development in our field, the recognition of the whole scope of the English language as the basic content. It is a content to be

taught with constant reference to composition and rhetoric on the one hand and to literature on the other, but it is a content legitimate and significant in itself. I suggest that as recognition of this new development, the New English, becomes general, our discipline will be a much more valuable element in the entire school program and we who are involved in it will have a much deeper reason for being proud of being teachers of English.

Trends in Teaching Composition

by

Wallace W. Douglas

Northwestern University

(Note: Mr. Douglas spoke impromptu, substituting for Robert Gorrell, who could not come because of Chicago's blizzard. Mr. Douglas's remarks were based on his report to the NCTE Executive Committee, meeting in New Orleans, October 1966. That report is reprinted here.)

I am not sure that there is anything much that I can add this year to what James McCrimmon reported last year about developments in the teaching of composition. Like him, I notice that the articles in College Composition and Communication are often quite substantial analyses of the properties of various kinds of writing forms. And I notice, as he did, a growing interest in rhetoric--or at least in that one of the five parts that in Roman theory went under the name of dispositio or compositio, in our modern parlance "stylistics," the arranging of words in sentences and paragraphs. I am not, however, quite so optimistic about it all as McCrimmon announced himself to be. And perhaps I might begin by mentioning the cause of my comparative gloom; or, if "gloom" is too strong a word, then my "un-encouragement."

I

What I have in mind is the persistence--or indeed, the preservation--of the school tradition about children and writing. By "school tradition" I mean simply all those attitudes and activities of teachers which depend on the assumption that children's writings are (or should be treated as) "compositions";[1] and that compositions are, then, practice exercises which children must do in school so that later, presumably in life, they will "write more clearly, more accurately, and with surer skill and power." It would be interesting, I think, to investigate the incidence, in articles on teaching composition, of terms like "skills," "proficiency," and "standards of good writing," for surely it is around the notion of increasing the child's control of such abstractions that teachers, except, perhaps, those in the primary grades, organize work in composition.

It is this assumption no doubt that justifies, if it does not explain, the persistence of our obsessive concern with errors and weaknesses in children's writing, the differences between the properties and characteristics of children's writing and those we have become accustomed to finding when we read the highly edited work of more or less professional writers. In its purest form this concern expresses itself in rather direct, no-nonsense sort of language, such as the following, which I take from two statements issued just this fall by the curriculum committee of the English Department at what is generally regarded as one of the major high schools of the country:

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[1]Composition: "a piece of writing; esp: a written exercise done for a course of writing in school and usu. intended to show study and care in arrangement"; also "a course in colleges and secondary schools designed to train students to write esp. exposition"; also "the construction of a literary work esp. with reference to its degree of success in meeting criteria of correctness, order, or proportion." Webster III

9/20/66
The English Curriculum Committee has reviewed the department's policy on No-Excuse spelling errors and Serious Weakness errors. It is our consensus that the policy should continue as explained below. If we let down on these errors, we believe that we are not letting pupils know the seriousness with which the business world and colleges consider errors like these and are postponing the day when similar penalties will be inflicted.

The Committee believes that the problem with the policy has been that not all teachers have followed it. It is our consensus that if the department has this policy, every teacher must follow it. Those who don't are just creating problems for those who do. If there are teachers who feel that they cannot follow the policy as described below, we want to have their reactions by this Friday. It is planned to have the penalties effective on Oct. 17. By that time teachers should have reviewed the policy with all of their classes (except Basics, where the policy doesn't apply) and reviewed the No-Excuse list.

1. On impromptus: Teachers should return ungraded those themes which contain NE's or SW's, indicating that there are such errors and that pupils are to find them and return the papers for grading. Teachers of freshmen and sophomores should probably indicate the kind of error but not opposite the line containing the error. Teachers of juniors and seniors should not indicate the kind of error, just that there are NE's and SW's or both. This policy, we believe, is fair because it takes into consideration the conditions under which the writing was done and also gives a pupil an opportunity to catch his error before the paper is graded. The penalties apply when a paper is returned and contains NE's and SW's.

2. On papers prepared outside of class: The penalties apply without returning the themes to pupils because pupils have time for careful proofreading, which should include the use of a dictionary.

3. On all rewrites: all penalties apply.

<u>The Penalties</u>

1. One or more No-Excuse words misspelled--a grade should be lowered one mark--from a one to a two, for example. The grade the theme is worth should be indicated first but crossed out with the second grade given with an explanation. For example: ~~2~~ 3 NE.

2. One or more serious weaknesses--SW's--a grade should be lowered one mark, just as for the No-Excuse words. The serious weaknesses are as follows:
   a. Three or more misspelled words
   b. Failure to follow manuscript style
   c. Run-on sentence
   d. Fragment (ineffective one)
   e. Comma splice (ineffective one)

   Most teachers have pupils asterisk fragments and comma splices that they are deliberately using. The teacher then needs to consider whether the devices are effective.

3. A mark cannot be lowered more than two marks because of No-Excuse or Serious Weakness errors. For example, a 3 theme basically but with one No-Excuse word and an ineffective fragment would get a 5. If the 3 theme also had a run-on sentence, it would still get a 5.

10/3/66
The Curriculum Committee has reviewed all comments and is submitting the following suggestions for changes in policy and is inviting your comments. The Committee would like to emphasize that it is not the intent of the Committee or of any teachers in the department who approve of the policy to put an emphasis on the errors or weaknesses cited, though it is an emphasis on teaching pupils careful proofreading, which is part of the total writing process. It is also not the intent that the policy be construed as punitive but rather to encourage proofreading as part of one's being a meticulous person. It has been the feeling of past committees and of a good many teachers in the department that without some such policy that we are not teaching the total writing process and that we are therefore encouraging sloppiness. Most of the criticism leveled at the policy has come from teachers who believe in the policy, enforce it, but experience difficulty from pupils who say that their "teacher last year never enforced the policy and why do you have to do it?" As a committee, therefore, we are eager that whatever policy we do adopt must be enforced by everyone in the department.

But pretty soon the tradition is going to be expressed by such relatively sophisticated terms as "language deficits" or "language deprivation." Currently such terms are most often heard when people are talking about the "language problems" of disadvantaged children. But since they express pretty exactly what we feel about the writing that most children do for us, I suspect that we will soon be finding them in analyses of the writing of ordinary middle class children and, subsequently, in justifications of what might otherwise be regarded as rather old-fashioned teaching practices. As a matter of fact, I will predict that, to increase the usefulness of these terms, teachers will more and more be citing the work of Basil Bernstein, precisely because he seems to offer theoretical support for the kind of thing we like to do anyway. Compare the following comment on the concept of the "elaborated language of the middle class," with which the writer credits Bernstein: "This language is more accurate, more grammatically correct, and more precise /than the restricted language of the lower class/. As such, it can express a wide range of thought."[2] Obviously this version of Bernstein will justify grammatical exercises and also exercises in sentence development, such as are being advocated, I think, by Walter Loban. And I wonder if we ought not to fear--or at least to be aware of the possibility of--a return to the days when children in composition classes spent more time in correcting or revising exercise-book sentences than in any actual writing on their own.

I suspect that these rationalizations of "language study" are also going to be used to rescue "grammar" for teachers. Or at least they will be used to rescue teachers from the absurdity, not to say the difficulty, of arguing for the inclusion

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[2]Bernard Spodek, "Language Experience for Disadvantaged Children in the Kindergarten," Elementary English, XLIII (January 1966), 77-80, at p. 77.

of "grammar or "linguistics" in the school curriculum on the grounds that it is a "humane study" or a valid "intellectual discipline." Why such a study (if it is like history or algebra) need be taught for twelve years does not seem very clear; so perhaps things will be better all around when teachers fully possess these new reasons for "correlating the study of grammar and the principles of rhetoric with skills in written composition."

II

It is as a support of this school tradition that our growing interest in rhetoric is likely to have most effect. Rhetoric, many people will say, provides the English teacher a central discipline for teaching; and this especially when it is linked with logic and dialectic. No doubt some among us, wondering about connections between rhetoric and poetic (or at least the connection of rhetoric and literary works), would find that an improbably broad view of things. Others, remembering Socrates' aristocratic contempt for written down words, might ask how we will find ways to help our students' "language problems" by studying a system of analysis that was developed to teach Greek and Roman boys how to compose forensic, legislative, and epideictic speeches. Or at least that is what Aristotle seems to have thought rhetoric was all about, though indeed others, like Isocrates and Quintilian, may have had more elaborate ideas. Some other difficulties in coming to terms with "rhetoric"[3] seem to me to be suggested by our search for a "new" rhetoric and by our evident confusion about how we want to use the word. On the latter point see James J. Murphy, "The Four Faces of Rhetoric: A Progress Report," College Composition and Communication, XVII (May 1966), 55-9.

However uncertain we are about rhetoric, we all seem to be agreed that it is at least something to teach, offering a challenging subject matter and discipline to a portion of the school curriculum that has hitherto been very difficult to define. Since the principles of rhetoric are notoriously abstract, and the ways of realizing them in the practice of composition not easy to see, rhetoricians have pretty generally found this subject matter in an examination

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[3]Anyone interested in reviving rhetoric should read W. S. Howell, "Renaissance Rhetoric and Modern Rhetoric: A Study in Change," in Joseph Schwartz and John Rycenga, The Province of Rhetoric (New York: Ronald Press, 1965), pp. 292-308. The essay is a revision of the last chapter of Howell's Logic and Rhetoric in England: 1500-1700 (Princeton, 1956).

Here I cite particularly the following paragraph (at p. 301): "Since /Thomas/ Wilson's day, thanks to the influence of Bacon and Descartes, man has tended more and more to believe that his most important deliberations must be conducted in the light of all the particular facts that bear upon them. No longer does he feel that he can draw predominantly from common sense, general reason, or the wisdom that rests largely upon deductions from analogous past experience. When Descartes abandoned his belief in tradition and custom and decided to reconstitute his knowledge in terms of the direct observation of the great book of the world, he not only took a decisive step toward the creation of modern science, but he also represented in his own personal life the change that was coming over the whole intellectual life of Europe. And that change was too vast to leave rhetoric unaffected."

of the properties of finished pieces. In the late nineteenth century this tendency was frozen into the teaching tradition by Bain and his followers with their notion of the paragraph as the theme in little or as a writing form somewhere between the sentence and the theme. The sentence with its subject, the paragraph with its topic sentence, and the theme with its thesis together formed a very neat system, having numerous connections with the doctrine of the four forms of discourse. Now we seem to have got beyond that particular example of rhetorical practice; see Christensen's repudiation in "Symposium on the Paragraph," College Composition and Communication, XVII (May 1966), 61. But the general practice does not itself seem to be inquestion. Christensen's only objection to Bain and his followers is that they proceeded deductively, and their conclusions did not "fit what turns up when paragraphs are examined, inductively." Then he rejects the contention[4] that a paragraph is an arbitrary mark in the flow of discourse (p. 63), and he goes on to say firmly (but I think somewhat ingenuously) that he writes by paragraphs (p. 64). Which seems to me to be the giveaway: that is, Christensen's work on the paragraph, like that he has given to the sentence, will no doubt "redirect our emphasis in teaching," but only, I am afraid, our emphasis. For he seems to me to be continuing the traditional practice of teaching the process of writing by means of comments about the more or less observable qualities of what had been written, and I take it that he believes (with Bain) that papers are built up as accumulations of paragraphs. So in the end what it comes down to is merely the assertion that a refined (and inductive) version of an old system is superior to a crude (and deductive) version. It is not clear why this should be so.

III

Perhaps we can only guess the deadening effect of the school tradition; after all we have been brought up in it. But the evidence is there, if we can bring ourselves to look. Just about twenty years ago, at the NCTE meeting in Atlantic City, Porter Perrin gave a very broad and generous statement of the objectives of composition teachers:

> No matter in what dialect it is stated or under how many subheads it is divided, the basic aim of work in composition is simple: to help young people communicate their information and ideas; their imagined conceptions, and their desires and feelings appropriately in situations they meet or may meet--to speak and write to people.[5]

I judge that that is pretty close to being a type-sentence for the modern (or modernist) statement of teaching objectives. So perhaps there is something a little depressing to see what has happened to it since it was uttered. An article in the September English Journal[6] begins with a sentence that follows

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[4]See Paul C. Rodgers, Jr., "A Discourse-centered Rhetoric of the Paragraph," College Composition and Communication, XVII (February 1966), 2-11.

[5]Porter G. Perrin, "Maximum Essentials in Composition," College English, VIII (April 1947), 352-60, at p. 353.

[6]Kenneth Keskinnen, "'Shooting an Elephant'--An Essay to Teach," English Journal, LV (September 1966), 669-75.

the pattern of Perrin's: "As teachers of writing, we are concerned with teaching our students to communicate thoughts and feelings clearly, effectively, and responsibly." No doubt there is some comfort and even gratification to be found in the fact that correctness is absent from this statement, as it was from Perrin's. But still "teaching" is a rather poor exchange for "helping." And one does wonder whose ideas the students are going to communicate; those of large thinkers and of literary men, perhaps? Furthermore it is rather worrying (though not exactly surprising) to be told in the very next sentence that teachers of writing "feel most comfortable and competent" teaching examples of "expository writing" because in them "such matters as organization and paragraph development seem to be most apparent, and therefore most teachable."

We want "to help students write more clearly, more accurately, and with surer skill and power." The words express our concern, our sense of obligation to the future of our students; for undoubtedly we all would complete the sentence with some sort of words referring, all too uncertainly, to a future state in which the students will "use" the skills we have practiced them in, the proficiencies we have given them, and thus be able to "get along" better. But surely such postponed rewards are neither sufficient nor even necessary conditions for writing. Indeed to hold them out as motives, to make them the basis of course planning may, in fact, inhibit rather than promote the students' interest in writing, even his basic fluency and literacy.

Writing is, after all, a creative activity. Words are given form as discourse, and in that in-forming act there must also and necessarily be achieved some control over outer experience and, undoubtedly, the inner economy of the personality. If such be the case, I should suppose that students ought to be allowed to experience the rewards that are characteristic of any creative act from the mean ones, like making cakes or chairs, to the grander ones, like making poems or paintings. These rewards are, in the first place, the relatively simple and immediate ones that come with doing a job that one wants to do. I suppose I am talking about personal or self satisfaction, or the pleasure of accomplishment. But accomplishment in or with words may not mean so much to most of our students as it does to us, for whom the experiencing of literary form may have rather great attraction. With our students, therefore, we must be prepared, even though reluctantly, to accept the possibility of a second kind of value, arising entirely from changes within. We must never, that is, forget the sheer expressive value of writing, which may be all the greater in the case of students who do not write well according to our standards. And in any event it is essential that we always treat the writing of children as "children's writing," not as some more or less inadequate approximation of adult work. And I think our question then would be something like this: How can we provide occasion and opportunity for students to write to their own satisfaction while at the same time giving them enough support in the way of information about public conventions of writing so that they can receive the additional satisfaction of some sort of general awareness of their success in writing. How can we help them achieve public currency and value for writing?

Trends in Reading

by

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Increasingly we are aware that education is big business--and one of the biggest areas or elements in this big business is the teaching of reading. Reading is of concern to practically everyone: children want to learn to read, their parents and teachers want them to learn, and the public insists that they be taught.

Those of us here know of the concern--it is our concern. Because of it, reading has received more research attention than any other area of the elementary and secondary curriculum. An example of this emphasis is shown in the review of research in the elementary school language arts for 1966 that Paul Burns and I recently completed; of 115 reports reviewed, 74 are of reading studies and another 8 are other reviews or analyses of reading research. This same degree of emphasis has been present in each of the five years during which I have participated in this reviewing.

I am to talk about trends in reading. This I must do in somewhat general terms, reflecting my personal interpretations of what I have read and observed. I'm sure I will not list all the trends someone else might, and some things that I see as trends may not be seen by others.

I

Trends in reading are of interest currently to many persons. An indication of this interest is shown in the preview program I received only a few days ago for the meeting of the International Reading Association to be held in Seattle in early May. Trends are evident in the titles of many of the general and sectional meetings. Here, for example, are a few:

(1) Programs of Reading for Disadvantaged Learners;
(2) Interdisciplinary Approaches to Reading Problems;
(3) Developing Lifetime Readers;
(4) Summer Reading Programs;
(5) Reading in the Kindergarten;
(6) Special Reading Classes in the Junior and Senior High School;
(7) A Literary Program Matched to Students' Interests;
(8) Modality Approaches to Reading Problems;
(9) Psycholinguistic Insights into Reading Instruction;
(10) A Decade of Innovations in Approaches to Beginning Reading:
Language Experience,
Use of Color,
Linguistics in Reading,
i/t/a,
Programmed Materials,
Multi-Media Techniques.

As I view trends in reading, I classify them into three principal categories.

The first includes those trends which reflect influences from sources outside the profession. More properly these might be called forces which are causing trends to develop, or which have the potential to do so. By outside the profession I mean outside the group of teachers and educators who traditionally have been the principal ones concerned with the teaching of reading. The second category includes those movements, proposals, and innovations which purport to solve all or most of the problems that face the teacher of reading and the children who are learning to read. I call these pseudo trends. They are sometimes advanced by panacea seekers, and they are usually accepted by others of this group. As I have indicated, these are not really trends but are transient flurries in various directions, though some may lead to trends. The third category includes those things which I consider to be genuine trends.

II

Turning to each of these, then, let me comment briefly.

As to trends from the outside, I see three forces bringing these about. The principal force is the U. S. Office of Education. This force is felt in all areas of the curriculum but especially in the humanities in the past two or three years with the establishment and facilitating of Curriculum Development Centers and Regional Laboratories, the provision for institutes, and the granting of funds to local districts to buy materials and to employ special reading teachers.

A coming force in this governmental area is the Compact for Education among the State Governments. Further, in this area of governmental prodding, at least one state, California, has entered the reading picture directly with legislation providing funds for reading specialists, librarians, the testing of children, and extra financial help for districts with the greatest needs.

The second of these forces from outside, one of increasing importance to all education, is the entrance into the publishing of materials and the producing of equipment of some of the giant industries in the country. Reading was early recognized by these industries as a particularly lucrative area--and there is evidence of this in the pages of every journal dealing with reading. These industries are looking for outlets for their technology, and we can increasingly expect to be overwhelmed with their "hardware," their packaging, and --of course--their books.

It seems to me that much of the hardware, at least, is directed toward the panacea seekers, but the effect of the big industry entrance is important and is promoting both flurries and trends. Its efforts are sustained by extensive advertising and the "hard sell," and as long as the school population is increasing and "diversification" of industry is permitted, it will continue and perhaps become intensified.

I don't mean to imply here that I think this is all bad. In many ways it is good to have the interest of industry in the problems of education. Many of the things produced by its technology will undoubtedly result in desirable trends and will ultimately move us forward toward the solving of some problems. There is already evidence of this. However, we do want to keep in mind that the profit motive is always present.

The third of the outside forces is the professionals from other disciplines. Linguists are, of course, in the forefront of this group, but a look at institute programs, for example, shows that other disciplines, too, are now interested in the teaching of reading. One can see the names of sociologists, pediatricians, anthropologists, psychiatrists, and social workers, among others. This force--with the trends and flurries it is producing --has been fostered by the U.S. Office of Education, but it has also resulted from expressions of the public's concern with the problem of teaching reading and the feeling that perhaps some new views are needed. Undoubtedly, too, the force has developed because of the influx of money--money made available to others than those upon whom the burden of teaching reading has traditionally fallen. In addition, of course, it has resulted from the availability of new knowledge--that from the linguists, for instance--and the extension of the social consciousness of those in other disciplines to schools and school-related issues.

In the second category of trends--those I identified as pseudo trends (and this is probably a classification that is too general, and in some ways misleading)--many things may be included. The popular press is a pretty good source of the names given them. I may be too conservative in not accepting as trends some of these that others have accepted. But I am afraid that too many teachers, and too many educators who influence teachers, are inclined to seek simple answers to complex questions, to "jump on the bandwagon," to regard innovations as trends, and to accept some one innovation as <u>the</u> answer.

To me, probably the best example of innovations not solving the problems met in teaching reading is the evidence revealed by the 27 first grade studies on which the federal government spent more than a million dollars. Certainly some of these studies were not well-designed or well-conducted research, nor did many of them examine the right questions, but in spite of these limitations, the results apparently show that there are many ways to teach reading to beginners and that teacher enthusiasm, pupil needs, and socio-economic conditions of the learners are more important than methods, materials, and administrative implementation. I want to say, however, that I don't believe, as some do, that any substantial number of these studies actually dealt with methods. For example, I don't think that a teacher using i/t/a materials is <u>necessarily</u> using a different method than she might be with traditional materials. This is not to say that some things were not learned from these studies. Nor do I want to leave the impression that all innovations are lacking in value. Some are of definite value, and their use--or the use of some elements from them--indicates genuine and valuable trends--and I'll refer to some of them shortly.

I want to turn now to the substantial trends, the trends that I believe will be extended and will improve the teaching of reading and aid the youngsters in learning. Some of these are traceable to the innovations, the panaceas, that I've tended to condemn. Many are traceable also to the major forces of government, industry, and other disciplines. These trends include the following:

(1) Recent interest in the education of the disadvantaged has led to a recognition of socio-economic influences upon learning, which, translated to the specific area of reading, means that children from disadvantaged homes have had fewer experiences of the type to which much of the school curriculum has traditionally been related, that they have developed less facility with the kind of language related to such experiences, and that they are much more reticent in using the language they do know. Fortunately, we have not only recognized these facts but we are beginning to do something about them--through the education of teachers and through changes in curriculum and materials.

(2) Related to this, but also of particular pertinence to the reading programs for more advantaged children, is the increased recognition given to differences in pupils' abilities and the ways by which instruction can best care for these differences. This greater recognition has led to a more sensible look at programs of readiness for beginning reading, including the giving of instruction in reading to some kindergarten children. This recognition has also meant that for some children there has been an extension of beginning readiness programs, including the preschool ones such as Head Start and those which delay the beginning of reading instruction past the first grade. The greater attention to individual differences has also led to experimentation with grouping plans; for instance, the extension of departmentalization downward into the intermediate grades has permitted reading programs to focus better upon each pupil's needs.

(3) Attempts are being made to use the findings of linguistics in reading programs. This trend is shown in the more natural forms of language appearing in books the children read, in concern with problems of dialect as they relate to learning to read, in the general taking into account of new knowledge about language and the way it is learned, and in the placement of reading instruction in a total language arts framework as a result of the recognition that all of the language arts are related and that oral language is the base of all other aspects. These I regard as positive trends, but there are shortcomings and it is well to remember that a trend is not a final accomplishment. Thus, I do not regard the so-called linguistic readers which present content that is as stilted as any found in the traditional basal readers to be anything but a stage in the trend. In many instances I place these in the category with other panacea approaches. At the same time, however, there are already changes in the basal reader programs because of linguistic findings, and there will be further changes.

(4) There is a greater recognition being given to the role of the teaching of reading in the high school. Some attention to reading at the secondary level has been with us for a number of years, but it has tended to be somewhat superficial. Now there are better textbooks on the teaching of reading in high school available both to students preparing for high school teaching and to teachers now in service. These texts, and the newer materials available for use with pupils, give greater attention to the diagnosis of problems and to specific remedies for them. In texts and in programs for students, there is recognition that high school students, too, have problems with word recognition, and those who have such problems are being taught the structural and phonetic analysis skills that they did not properly learn in the elementary school. Also, high school reading programs are becoming developmental in nature; that is, we are more aware of the need for virtually all students to receive some reading instruction. For example, even those who read well can be helped to adjust reading rate to material read, to interpret what is read (and I don't mean just in a literary sense), and to learn to use books efficiently.

(5) Many schools and school districts are beginning to employ additional personnel to give a better ratio of teachers to pupils in this crucial subject area. These include special reading teachers, supervisors, and teacher aids. We are also trying to make certain that teachers themselves are better informed by testing their knowledge and by giving in-service courses directed specifically to the gaps the tests have shown.

(6) There is an increasing recognition of the fact that a reading program is unsuccessful unless it makes readers of the children. This trend is recognizable

in better constructed and more meaningful materials, in the increase in supplemental books, and simply in the greater availability of books. This trend is particularly noticeable in the use of paperbacks in high school literature programs and in changes in the context of literature anthologies. But while this recognition that a student must not only be able to read but must also do so is a trend, there continues to be evidence that it is not yet successful; it is an uphill fight.

(7) The last of the trends which I have attempted to identify is a composite of many things. A questioning attitude, a seeking for better ways of teaching and for better constructed and more appealing materials, a dissatisfaction with procedures and materials that have not worked as successfully as we would like, a critical examination of new materials, the implementation of classroom experimentation--all of these represent a trend of inquiry, an expression of open-mindedness. This is perhaps the most important trend of all.

III

With all of these trends in reading--both real and pseudo--what knowledge can be said to be of most value to directors and participants of NDEA institutes?

Directors certainly should know of the Office of Education activities related to reading instruction. They should know about materials available from Curriculum Centers and their possible uses. They should know, too, what regional laboratories are doing and how they might help an institute. And they must know the provisions of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act and what information about the act should be given to institute participants.

Something of the newer products of present technology should be known by both directors and participants--for example, such things as the Audio Notebook, filmstrip or film and tape units, overhead projectors and transparencies, "talking typewriters," programmed materials, and language laboratories.

Participants should receive explanations and critical evaluations of many of the programs and materials currently in the news--and here I mean both the popular press and the professional journals. These programs and materials include the following:

(1) New basal materials such as the McKee-Harrison readers;
(2) The approaches labeled linguistics, such as the materials by Fries, the Bloomfield-Barnhart Let's Read, the Royal Road Readers, the Richards-Gibson First Steps in Reading;
(3) The language-experience approach;
(4) Phonic approaches such as the Hay-Wingo Reading with Phonics, the McCracken-Walcutt Basic Reading, Sister M. Caroline's Breaking the Sound Barrier;
(5) i/t/a programs;
(6) The English Institutes Materials Center publications.

Participants need also to know of the importance of an oral language foundation to reading, of the role which socio-economic status plays in students' abilities and interests in learning, of the accumulating evidence regarding readiness for beginning instruction, of plans for caring for individual differences. Further, they should know some of the findings of linguistics that have relevance to reading instruction; they need to be better instructed regarding the relationship

of reading to the other language arts; and, finally, they need to know about motivating children to read, about sustaining their interest in reading--and they need to see and examine materials which will help them with this.

These, then, as I see it, are the major influences and trends in reading instruction, and some of the implications of these for the planning of NDEA Institutes.

The Uses of EIMC Materials in 1966: Significance for the Future

by

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Disquieting evidence of failure in many 1965 English institutes to make extensive use of EIMC publications impelled the Modern Language Association to conduct a field study of problems attendant to dissemination and use of these materials in the 1966 institutes. The report[1] based upon this inquiry has been so widely circulated since last November that it seems wasteful tonight to review it in any detail, so, as one of its contributors, I prefer to spend my time elaborating certain of the report's most compelling observations and recommendations.

The high achievement of the 1966 institutes comprises another significant chapter in the history of reform in the education of teachers of English. As authors of the next chapter, you directors doubtless will turn to various accounts of events in previous institutes to search out ideas for improving the quality of life and learning in your own institutes this summer. This evening we shall examine the experience of 1966, but only from a very limited angle, only from the perspective 1966 offers for turning EIMC material to better account in the future.

I

First, though, let us return to Donald Gray's report[2] on the 1965 English institutes for a quick review of his conclusions. Professor Gray and his associates found that faculties of institutes were, to use his words, "suspicious and neglectful of new material they did not know about." Professor Gray noted a lack of what he called "close and consecutive study" of new materials in courses and workshops. His report concluded that faculties in the 1965 institutes did not "take seriously their responsibility to introduce teachers to new media and new materials."

The different procedures of assessment make it difficult to compare precisely the performance of 1965 with that of 1966, but there were sufficient points of congruence between the findings in 1965 and in 1966 to allow us to conclude that the record of use of EIMC materials had not improved substantially from one year to the next. Professor Gray accumulated his data through questionnaires and firsthand observation, and so did we last summer. Mr. Shugrue, Mr. Barth, and I spent two days in each institute. By the end of the summer we had visited twenty-six institutes. We compared our impressions when we met together to conduct the twenty-seventh visit. The three of us did see a variety of new materials, including EIMC publications, in most places. But, we could not always conclude that the EIMC collection was an integral part of the institute program. For example, only in half the places I visited did I see EIMC units receiving the kind of "close and consecutive study" warranted. Similar experiences on the part of Mr. Shugrue and Mr. Barth led us to appraise the use of EIMC materials as

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[1]Michael F. Shugrue, et. al., An Evaluation of the Use of English Institute Materials Center Curriculum Materials in NDEA Summer Institutes in English (New York: Modern Language Association, 1966).

[2]Donald J. Gray, The 1965 Institutes in English (New York: Modern Language Association, 1966), pp. 101-102.

"disappointing" again in 1966. We had to conclude that still in 1966 there were too many faculties of institutes not taking seriously enough their obligation to introduce teachers to new resources for curriculum improvement. In making this assessment, we considered unguided reference use, though widely prevalent, to fall short of an ideal introduction to EIMC materials.

II

The question next arises--why have not EIMC publications more frequently been pressed into service in course and workshop? I propose several answers for your consideration. The first, I think, lies in the nature of man and his characteristic response to innovation. About 350 years ago Francis Bacon limned this aspect of human behavior in his essay "Of Innovations." Bacon said,

> It is ture, that what is settled by custom, though it be not good, yet at least it is fit; and those things which have long gone together, are as it were confederate within themselves; whereas new things piece not so well; but though they help by their utility, yet they trouble by their inconformity. Besides they are like strangers; more admired and less favored.

I, like Donald Gray, also found some directors and instructors neglectful of EIMC materials because they were suspicious of them, and, I must add, unfortunately these suspicions did not always derive from close, critical reading of the texts. Some directors and instructors did, of course, advance thoughtful, responsible reservations about features of particular EIMC units.

It is worthwhile, though, to consider more fully the grounds for the suspicion of some directors and their instructors. A good many of the most skeptical ones identify closely with an academic tradition that has steadfastly scorned the madness of educational method. As an aside here I might note an observation of the French historian Marc Bloch who says, "to the great despair of historians, men fail to change their vocabulary every time they change their customs."[3] This is an observation very much applicable to the area of English curriculum and method, for the teaching unit of the sixties is unlike the teaching unit of the thirties or forties. Nevertheless, in the minds of some, EIMC units are conceived as a piece of the great briar patch of English curriculum and method characteristic of an earlier age.

Some directors and instructors tend to see the seamless web of subject and method as separate entities. The latter area, possessing scant intellectual legitimacy in their view, arouses at best only a limp commitment. One instructor exemplified this division of mind in answering a question I had put to him: He started his reply with these words: "As an instructor and <u>not</u> a curriculum expert, I...." Many times directors and instructors disclaimed knowledge of the EIMC teaching units, saying that their major interest was in the subject not pedagogy. Often then, they would summon the workshop instructor, presenting him as resident authority on teaching guides and their uses. Since as many of the 1966 directors and instructors had shunned for so long either new or old publications with a pedagogical slant, it is not surprising we found so substantial a number lacking familiarity with such recently developed teaching material as EIMC units.

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[3]Marc Bloch, <u>The Historian's Craft</u>, translated from the French by Peter Putnam (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1953), p. 34.

Given this background, the scene in a number of places looked something like this. Imagine the situation. Here we have Director X acting under both the pressure of USOE guidelines insisting on inclusion of new material in his program and the pressure of tight deadlines for ordering from the English Institute Materials Center. In these circumstances, Director X very likely selected hastily from the plenitude of unfamiliar EIMC offerings an assortment of new things that "pieced not so well" with other components of instruction in the institute. Also given the attitude that curriculum materials are concerned mainly with methods or pedagogy or something else remote from the discipline, Director X immediately consigned the whole package to the workshop instructor to do with as he would. Further, Director X's cursory inspection revealed that members of his academic staff would find in the curriculum materials little of consequence for academic courses. Thus, in choosing not to circulate the materials, Director X helped his instructors stay innocent of possible confederations. It also was quite evident in some cases that regardless of Director X's persuasion, he could never have gotten some instructors to review EIMC materials.

In the meantime, Workshop Instructor Y was left to conduct an exploration of new material he may not have had a voice in selecting. If Workshop Instructor Y turned out to be broadly knowledgeable, if he exercised imagination and independence in his planning, if he could stretch his meager time allotment to include a range of new materials, and if his workshop hours were not pre-empted too frequently for guest speakers, EIMC materials had their day--or two. But sometimes Workshop Instructor Y, though a skillful classroom teacher, possessed a narrow understanding of the new curricula and perhaps only a slight apprehension of their significance. Sometimes, too, Workshop Instructor Y was carefully attendant to the biases of his employer. So the outcome of this little drama is predictable. All members of the staff leave EIMC untended on the shelves awaiting the discovery of alert and curious participants. Meanwhile, in the academic courses pure knowledge stayed divorced from classroom action, and in the workshop trusted, familiar commercial textbooks or district guides served as dominant models for lessons, units, and procedures. Unfortunately my fictional cast had too many counterparts in reality.

III

Our observations in 1966 suggest there are a variety of ways EIMC publications might serve purposes beyond reference use. In advancing these other ideas, however, I do not want to slight the importance of reference use. The complete reference set you all have received should be displayed prominently in your institute library. Multiple copies of items particularly relevant to the purposes of your institute also should be available. But even reference use, I think, should not be wholly unguided. Someone in your institute should be sufficiently familiar with the content of most of the units to discuss salient features with individual participants as they desire.

Teachers need both formal and informal opportunities to measure their ideas and programs against other exciting possibilities. For some time now members of Curriculum Study Centers have sought answers to perplexing teaching questions. The work of these Centers has brought the currency of research and scholarship in the discipline and the ways of learning it to bear upon the development of new teaching materials and procedures. Teachers at all levels of instruction should be allowed to share in the legacy of ideas accumulated through study and development at the Centers. The natural habitat for

using the legacy of EIMC materials is the workshop, so first I shall consider exemplary uses in that quarter, and then later I shall take up uses of these materials in academic courses. Before I go on to talk about uses of these materials in the workshop, I must elaborate my conception of the ideal workshop.

As I see the picture, the teacher-as-student of literature, language, or composition moves from his academic studies into a workshop where he resumes his role of teacher-as-professional. The chief aim of the workshop should be to offer time for the teacher to review his academic studies in relation to his professional assignment at whatever level he serves. In the company of his fellows, the teacher can engage in shared study, analysis, and discussion of ends, issues, and means of teaching English at particular instructional levels. This process of inquiry and demonstration, conducted under the leadership of the workshop instructor--who himself should have substantial and varied experience grounded in public school classrooms, could assume mainly the form of a kind of guided conversation about the several dimensions of English and the means of imparting them in relation to one another to particular types of pupils. I feel the term colloquium characterizes the nature of this part of the institute better than the label workshop, which signifies a range of aims and styles of procedure somewhat different from the ones I envision.

Although each of the several institute courses uses its own distinct working materials (stories, poems, plays, rhetorics, grammars, curriculum guides, and professional works) the unity of point of view within the staff as a whole should bring a high degree of consonance to the program. The instructors of the several parts should be in substantial enough agreement on principles of teaching English to make it possible for any participant to find various inter-connections between the sections. I suppose this kind of unity of vision is relatively rare, but I did see some striking examples of it during my visits last summer. The institute at San Fernando Valley State College, California, was a particularly noteworthy example.

The workshop should afford opportunity for practice in the preparation of useful lessons in language, composition, or literature informed by principles emerging in the academic courses. I would avoid any attempts to produce elaborate teaching units. The limitations of time imposed by the academic work load renders such labors overly burdensome even if they are desirable. Instead participants should create only a limited number of model lesson sequences or partial units -- a number just sufficient to expand knowledge of practical and effective ways of selecting, ordering, and presenting phases of the subject at particular levels of instruction. These sample lessons deriving from the academic work and from EIMC models, if keyed to appropriate instructional levels, will make explicit the relevance of advanced studies to everyday teaching situations. Pure knowledge does not always need to be divorced from action.

The claims against the workshop hour are many, but the claim of teachers for guidance in the use of new materials should take precedence over all others. Examination of and practice in the use of the newer resources of instruction in English should figure prominently in the conduct of the workshop. This element is especially important to those teachers remote from centers developing such material. Through various means, but especially through use of appropriate EIMC units, an effective workshop should help teachers translate and consolidate their academic studies for use on the grounds of action in their own classroom.

Now to the specific uses of EIMC publications in the workshop. Basically there are two kinds of approaches that might be followed with profit: study in depth and study in breadth. First let us look to the study of selected units in depth. Close analytic examination of at least one of the EIMC units should be a common feature of the workshops. One might examine, for example, a cognitive-centered unit from the Florida State Center asking such questions as these: What is the unit's purpose, level, and direction? Are its objectives relevant to its audience? What view of the child or adolescent does it presume? What view of the nature of learning does it presume? What degree of specificity does it possess? What are its divisions and groupings and what is their rationale? How is sequence between units achieved? If one were examining a complete program such as the Carnegie sequence, certain of the above questions would be relevant, but one also would want to ask others. Does it provide for the gradation and articulation of its parts? Does it provide for the recurrence of concepts at advancing levels of development? What is its relation to existing curricula or textbooks?

When we reach the latter question, we have moved to another way of using EIMC units in depth: planning comparative studies. Taking two or more units for the same grade, the workshop instructor might ask how they differ and why? For example, one could compare Florida's Curriculum I or Curriculum II units with Carnegie's tenth grade units asking how they differ in scope, substance, structure, level, and style. Using the Nebraska literature units one could examine progression in the treatment of the nature of satire at four different grade levels. One could compare approches toward teaching the novel using Indiana, Oregon, and Carnegie units. Comparisons of the philosophy and rationale of the Oregon, Minnesota, and Carnegie Center programs might be very illuminating.

Another form of close study calls for careful examination of a guide to determine its suitability for local circumstances. If a local system or single school adopted the Northwestern composition program, what modifications might be needed in that situation? What additions, omissions, or changes might be required? What combinations might be possible? Would parts of other programs be compatible with the Northwestern one? How could one set up a systematic program of evaluation to test one of these new instructional approaches, to find out what happens to students following it under local conditions?

Another possibility for use of EIMC lessons and units is in demonstration lessons and as models for creating lessons and units. For example, Nebraska's Wind in the Willows unit offers an excellent example of the means of organizing a longer work for teaching. It shows how fairly sophisticated literary concepts can be worked naturally and inductively into the treatment of the text. Its accompanying lessons for analysis of rhetoric and style offer good examples of the use of selected passages for language analysis. Carnegie's three volume sequence, now commercially available, would offer a useful means of showing organization of a year's work in English at 10th, 11th and 12th grade levels. These Carnegie guides might be analyzed to determine principles of selecting and grouping work, to assess approaches to teaching poetry and fiction, to study various types of assignments in language and composition. The Nebraska and Northwestern composition units, often identified last summer as the freshest, most innovative of the materials released in '66, provide exacting detailed sources for developing composition programs. There are other units in the expanded EIMC collection available this year that would offer similar excellent possibilities for close study in workshops.

A second major way of providing an introduction to the EIMC materials is through a broad survey of the offerings. Obviously care needs to be exercised

in this approach to avoid superficiality. It is very easy to dump upon participants a vast clutter of ideas, leaving the students without any central organizing principles. A participant at one institute wrote me saying "I fear this report may not be of the highest quality--we've become extremely busy, and as the report might reflect, so much material has 'crossed our path' that it is difficult to identify the EIMC materials at this point." He was not alone in his predicament.

I saw the best example of effective use of the broad survey approach at the University of California at Davis. The Davis Institute offered a more extensive coverage of EIMC as well as other new materials than any other institute I visited. Because James Gray, the workshop instructor, recognized the significance of Curriculum Center work and because he knew his resources so well, he was able to present effectively relevant examples of teaching procedures drawn from EIMC units throughout his workshop sessions. Also, he knew EIMC publications fully enough to provide the kind of individual guided reference use I spoke of earlier. As Mr. Gray introduced the units briefly and periodically during his workshop sessions, he assigned them to special committees for review in depth. These committees were set up to reflect various divisions of the subject--literature, language, composition, or particular teaching problems such as those posed by different types of learners. During the seventh week of the institute, reserved exclusively for workshop meetings, committee members reviewed EIMC materials along with selected commercial textbooks before the entire group and led discussions of their salient features and possible uses. During one of my visits to Davis I attended a review session. I heard participants offering trenchant evaluations of the Nebraska and Northwestern composition work along with comments on about a dozen commercial textbooks on composition. This session was so vibrant with ideas that it was easy to see why attendance ran so high even though this session and all the others that week were arranged as free-choice electives. That I was able to get more sharply focused comments from participants at Davis on EIMC units is one measure of the success this broad survey approach might achieve when it is shrewdly planned.

The particular significance of the introduction, discussion and close study of EIMC in the workshop--that is, the key position of the workshop in working real changes upon teacher behavior that affect instruction of students--is anticipated in Henry M. Brickell's 1961 case study of the speed and quality of educational change in New York State. I think what Brickell has to say about the role of formal professional associations is equally true of the microcosmic professional association that tends to evolve in a workshop climate like the ones I have so far described. Brickell says:

> The professional associations are the supreme communicators in the professions.... Their effectiveness can be traced not to their periodicals and to speeches at conventions, but rather to informal contact among individuals at meetings. Most...teachers believe that the full truth about programs in other schools is unavailable through professional articles, formal speeches at conventions, research reports, and other information sources which are far removed from the classroom. Informal conversations, particularly with friends who can be trusted, are another matter.[4]

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[4]Henry M. Brickell, "State Organization for Educational Change: A Case Study and a Proposal," in Innovation in Education, ed. Matthew B. Miles (New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1964), p. 509.

I am certain it is the informal, yet guided, discussion of sample lessons and units in the workshop, a discussion shaped by principles and knowledge emergent from the academic courses, that sends a stream of ideas, fresh and true, coursing into the classroom. Intelligent discussion with trusted, informed colleagues is always fraught with the possibility of discovery, with the possibility of commitment.

Two other ways of using EIMC materials in workshop occur to me. If available, teachers who actually have tried out units in their own classroom might be called upon to report their experiences and demonstrate uses. Since ten units have been available through MLA and NCTE this year, there may be a sizeable cadre of teachers with firsthand experience in the trial of certain units. Of course, any available members of Curriculum Centers should be pressed into service as guest speakers. I realize the limitations upon this latter suggestion, but nonetheless I mention it because I was so impressed by the results of Al Kitzhaber's visit to Marylhurst College just outside Portland, Oregon. His discussion of the premises and essential features of the Oregon Center program served not only to place the Oregon materials in a fitting context, but it also provided an animating force supportive of the work of the institute at large.

I did not happen to see an example of the next idea I am about to propose, although Michael Shugrue did. One of the best means of showing the value of EIMC materials would be to arrange for their experimental use in summer demonstration school classes. Institute members could follow the progress of the trial of the materials through scheduled visits. Discussion with the demonstration teacher would help institute participants gather welcome information about actual serviceability of the units. Paul Marsh, in describing the problems of disseminating the materials of the Physical Science Study Committee, comments on the importance of firsthand experience: "...what can be inferred to have tipped the balance toward PSSC was the chance to see its goods working in classrooms.[5]

Now as I move toward the end of this commentary on possible uses of EIMC materials in institutes, I want to spend a few moments considering the place of these publications in academic courses. I see no reason at all why EIMC units should not gain entry into academic courses. I recall that Larzer Ziff, the member of the Berkeley English Department instructing the literature section in our '65 institute, devoted several of his meetings exclusively to teaching problems. At that time he did not take into account particular EIMC units unless questioned about them, but there is no reason why they could not be examined at fitting moments in the academic courses from a perspective different from the one in the workshop. I see no better place for at least some analytic study of these units according to principles advanced in the academic course. For example, one might take the Purdue opus unit, the Northern Illinois phonology unit, or one of the Nebraska satire units, raising questions such as the following: How does a particular unit exemplify critical or linguistic principles presented in the academic course? Does the unit in any way compromise principles central to the discipline? What view of man and the role of learning does the unit presume? What view of the nature of literature, or language, or composing does the unit presume? How valid are these conceptions? I feel these are basic questions requiring the guidance of scholars and specialists to search out their answers.

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[5]Paul E. Marsh, "Wellspring of Strategy: Considerations Affecting Innovations by the PSSC," in Miles, op. cit., p. 265.

Some of the units may also serve as instructional media in the academic courses. Not all of the EIMC units are equally well suited to this purpose, but some are. Last summer I saw Nebraska's Christensen composition unit and Oregon's transformational grammar used as supplemental texts in academic courses. In this year's collection Northern Illinois language units look as if they might well serve as supplemental works in language courses and in courses on teaching reading.

IV

Before ending my report on the experience of '66 and its implications for this summer, I would like to comment briefly on a few of the problems directors, instructors and participants identified in the administration of the EIMC program. Comments and recommendations of directors have led to a vastly improved descriptive brochure with expanded annotations, cross referencing, and a sample pattern of ordering. Last summer directors frequently insisted upon the need for inclusion of an explicit philosophical context for the curriculum segments included in the EIMC collection. Last year, the Oregon rationale found wide circulation and proved greatly valuable in illuminating the premises and principles governing the Oregon curriculum. In the case of some other Centers, however, members of institutes often complained that they did not see how a particular segment fitted into a larger scheme. I suspect that some of the most negative reactions and comments arose from failure to perceive the relation of part to whole. This condition has largely been corrected this year, for most of the centers submitting materials have included comprehensive statements of purpose and aim. The desire expressed last summer for a wider choice of offerings seems to be met amply in this year's catalog. The neglected areas in the last set-- literature units for elementary and junior high school, poetry, language history, and culturally disadvantaged-- have been filled in this year's catalog. The chance to go outside the Curriculum Centers for exemplary specimens of new materials also has been rendered possible this year by inclusion of the NCTE list of curriculum guides and the Hazard film list.

This then is the end of my report on what happened in the 1966 institutes along with some ideas for using more effectively EIMC in the 1967 institutes. I think it well for us all to stay mindful of the nature of EIMC publications. These represent sample curricula that have not sprung from the workaday world of English teaching. Curriculum reform of this magnitude could not exist if talented people had not been freed and endowed with funds to concentrate specifically on designing new programs. I think the work of the members of the Centers is much too valuable to continue to get the perfunctory attention it claimed in too many places last summer.

The means of reform in the use of EIMC materials this summer lie in the minds of this audience. We all can agree upon the primacy of disciplined study of our subject, but I hope also you will agree with me on the inter-relationship of subject, curriculum, and method. Teaching method and curriculum making depend ultimately on what the teacher or curriculum maker thinks the subject is. There must be a reciprocal relation between pure knowledge of the discipline, its arrangement and translation into school curricula, and its modes of presentation in schools. Anyone who has real command of the substance of most EIMC publications can hardly fail to see linkages between these materials and the substance of many English institute courses. For these materials embody significant aspects of the discipline rendered into teaching form appropriate to lower levels of

instruction. This year's assortment of EIMC units fits well within the continuum of knowledge in English running from elementary school to graduate school.

I hope this Chicago meeting has provided everyone here with a more receptive command of the substance of EIMC publications. I hope you all are persuaded of the value of this material for your institutes and the profession. At the very least I hope the meeting has helped to dislodge any complacent attitudes that may have existed and I hope everyone sees the whole apparatus of EIMC units as a means to attainment of finer, more precise, more discriminating instruction in English. For if this vision prevails, we shall see enlightened selection and use of EIMC in '67.

During much of my time this evening I have exposed weaknesses in the uses of EIMC materials last summer. To dwell at such length on a single aspect is bound to distort and blunt the truly impressive achievements of the '66 institutes. As a corrective I must emphasize that on the whole in most places I found the work of these institutes highly laudable. Faculties generally were competent and dedicated; participants usually were highly responsive. I was rarely bored and frequently excited by the instruction I witnessed in the thirty or more courses I visited. Nearly everywhere I saw a keener, a fuller, and a more governed kind of awareness of the discipline of English developing. I left most institutes convinced that they were moving English teachers toward finer achievement. I have no doubt that when the history of the '67 institutes is written, it will report that you have endowed your participants with new discoveries and the power to employ them wisely.